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A N A P P E A L  
TO THE  
CITIZENS OF NEWTON,  
EMBRACING A  
BRIEF HISTORY OF THE TOWN.

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S. Davis



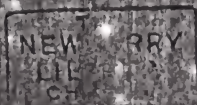


Amos Jackson Esq  
Boston

An Appeal  
to the  
Citizens of Newton  
embracing a  
Brief History of the Town  
By S. Davis.

1847.

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**SHELF CARD**

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AN APPEAL  
TO THE  
CITIZENS OF NEWTON,  
EMBRACING A  
BRIEF HISTORY OF THE TOWN.

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*Citizens of Newton:*

We think any honest, *unprejudiced* mind must perceive the necessity for the division of a town with physical features like those of Newton; a town containing five post offices, eight meeting-houses, and about five thousand inhabitants, mostly living in villages on its very borders, and without a common centre. It must be seen that the peace, harmony, interest and convenience of the inhabitants require the division of such a corporation, and that *will* instead of *wisdom* opposes so equitable a measure. But although these truths are distinctly seen, the "great majority" of the inhabitants, (i. e. the people of the southern, central, and eastern parts,) have always been opposed to this measure, as they have to every measure calculated to give the inhabitants of the West Parish, privileges equal to their own. As it can be shown that the inhabitants of the westerly part of the town are not unreasonable in their demands, it follows that the inhabitants of the East are guilty of "monstrous injustice" \* toward the people of the West Parish. But that all candid persons may form their own opinions based upon a knowledge of the facts as they have and do now exist, an abstract of some of the records of the town are herewith presented, as being connected with the conflicting and discordant views entertained by the different sections of the town; however, before entering upon that subject, the reader's attention is requested to a very brief consideration of Newtowne as it was, and Newton as it is.

Soon after the settlement of Charlestown in 1628, other settlements were made to the north-west and west, extending many miles, all of which constituted the town of Newtowne, or perhaps more properly the Newtowne, in contradistinction from those





earlier settlements at Charlestown, Watertown, and Meadford, (as then spelled,) were, as early as 1630, by general consent, designated by those appellatives; but from the paucity of the records of this early period in our history, it would be no easy task to designate the definite boundaries of the several plantations. Six years after the settlement of Charlestown, it appears there were but twelve plantations in all Massachusetts Bay; as, at a Court holden at Newtowne, September 3d, 1634, "It was further ordered, that the sum of £600 shall be levied out of the several plantations for publique uses, the one half to be paid forthwith, the other half before the setting of the next Court, viz: Dorchester, 80; Roxbury, 70; Newtowne, 80; Watertown, 60; Saugus, 50; Boston, 80; Ipswich, 50; Salem, 45; Charlestown, 45; Meadford, 26; Wessagassett (Weymouth), 10; Barecove (Hingham), 4." Thus it appears that Newtowne possessed as much capital as any plantation at that time, and the most, with two exceptions, of any in the Colony. At the same Court, "It was further ordered that no person shall take tobacco publicly, under the penalty of eleven shillings, nor privately, in his own house or in the house of another, before strangers, and that two or more shall not take it anywhere, under the aforesaid penalty for each offence."

"At a Court holden at Newtowne on the second day of the ninth month, 1637, it was ordered, that no person shall be allowed to sell cakes and bunnis, except at funerals and weddings." These laws were enacted, so far as the records appear, not only by a majority, but unanimously. Prior to 1633, the Courts were holden at Boston, but from that period until 1638, they were all holden at Newtowne; but when the College was established at Newtowne, in 1638, the name was changed to Cambridge, and the Courts removed back to Boston. The present town of Newton remained a part of Cambridge, and known as Cambridge village or New Cambridge, until December 8, 1691, when, upon a petition to have the town divided, it was set off from Cambridge and incorporated into a separate town, by the name of Newtown; at what precise period the *w* was dropped does not appear, but probably by degrees. All the transfers of land and the acts of the town are recognized as being in Cambridge, until the act of incorporation.

In 1646, the Rev. John Elliot, minister of Roxbury, through the aid of an Indian servant, had so far acquired a knowledge of their language, as to be able to render himself intelligible to the neighboring Indians, and accordingly first visited them in company with two or three others, at the northeasterly part of the town, called Nonantum, or Nonanetum. His unwearied efforts were crowned with partial success. Many of the savages adopted the habits of the English, and had a regular place of





worship, and in 1651 they principally removed to Natick, and there built a town and established a church, which flourished for many years. But the settlement has melted away; only one female of about nineteen remains. Mr. Elliot, with a zeal unparalleled, acquired a knowledge of their language sufficient to enable him to translate the Bible, and other smaller works, into the language spoken by all the tribes in this vicinity.

That the reader may form some idea of the great efforts requisite to acquire a knowledge of the language first used in Christian worship within the precincts of Newton, a few extracts are here presented.

*Numerals.*

1. Pasuc.
2. Neese.
3. Nishwe.
4. Nabo.
5. Napanna.
6. Nequitta.
7. Nesusuc.
8. Nishshowosuc.
9. Pasucoogun.
10. Taushit pinque.
19. Nabo passucoogun.
20. Neeschage.
30. Nishshwinchage.
40. Yauschage.
50. Napanna taushinchage.
60. Nequitta taushinchage.
70. Nesusuc tahshinchage.
80. Shwosuc tahshinchage.
90. Pasucoogun tahshinchage.
100. Pasukoowe.
200. Neese pasukoowe.

*Genesis, 13: 7.* Onk penuanettuonk nashau chtopwulassam-muaenumoh wunnetasumoh Abram kak nashauwe wuttasam-muaenumoh wunnrelasumoh Lot. Kah kananittog, kah perisitogneit neit ne ootohkinneau.

8. Onk Abram wuttish Lotuh kooweequetumoush ahque penuanettuonk ohta; nashauwe neen kak ken, kah nashunwe, nulassammuaenumog kah kulassammuanumognewutehe koo-weemattitimun.

9. Sun mo wame ohkeno ansquabeankoowehquetumoush chippin kuhhog wutch neen, menadtuhteshaan neen, menadtuh-teashaan nen nuttinohtasheam, asuh enimuhreashean neu nummenadteasteam.

*Numbers, 10: 5.* Kah puhpeguohtamog wame quoshwe onk, neit wuthepwoac tuppuksinnowongashpis monchemooash.



6. Kuhl nahoh-toen puhpequontamook wameqnothweonk, neit soanac tuppuksinnowongath pish monchemoash, nag pish puh-pequonrumwog, wamequoshweonk wutche ummoncheongan-oooash.

*Exodus* 8: 32. Kah Pharoh menuhketeop wnttah newonk ut. Kah matta moncheaheau missinninnah.

*Exodus* 9: 35. Kah Pharoh wattah nano menuhketeop. Kah matrameaheam wunnaumonub Israel neanomp Jehovah naspen wunutcheganic Moses.

*Acts* 19: 36. Yeush matta konootasinog woh kuthequn apinwoo, onk matta won teagkutussumwoo tiudehn.

*Lamentations* 3: 46. Wame nummatwomanoognutounchrunk gunnonog.

*Genesis* 13: 6. Onk onke, mat tapenumoop wamunon cahoh, noh wutten weechayeuwntinuesoont werontche wuttinneetuon-gunoo missi, kan woh mat weechayenwurlleog.

Noowomanlammoonkanunonnash signifies, in English, *our loves*. Kummogkedonattoollummoooteaongannunnonash, *our question*.

The Lord's prayer, as recorded by Matthew, was written as follows:

*Matthew* 6: 9. Nooshun kesukgut guttianatamunach koowe-suonk.

10. Peyanmooutch kukketassootamooork, kuttentanlamoonk ne n, nach ohkeit neanakesukgut.

11. Nummectmongash askesukokish assamamneane yeuyeu kesukok.

12. Kah ahquoantamaiinnean nummatcheseongash neane matchenchukqueagig nutahquonlamounrononog.

13. Ahque sagkompagunaiinnean en gutchhuaouganit, webe pohquohwussinnean wutch matchitut; newutche kutahtaurm kelasceoonk, kah menuhkesuonk, kah sohsumoonk mickeme, Amen.

July 20th, 1664, the first church was gathered in Newton, then Cambridge Village, and Rev. John Elliot, son of John Elliot of Roxbury, was ordained same day. Born, August 31st, 1636; died, Oct. 11th, 1668, in the 33d year of his age.

There appears to be no record extant of the time when the first meeting house was erected, but probably prior to 1664, in the S. W. corner of the old burying ground. In 1696 the second house was built near the same spot, tradition says on the opposite side of the road. This second house was taken down and removed to Waltham in 1721, and a third house built on the spot where the new house is now being finished. The fourth house



was built in 1804; and the fifth, now occupying the same locality, being nearly finished, Feb. 1847.

Dec. 23d, 1674, Rev. Nehemiah Hobart was ordained, although he had supplied the pulpit for two years previous. He died August 25th, 1712, having preached 40 years.

It is supposed that not a dozen houses existed in what now constitutes the West Parish, at the time of Mr. Hobart's death, while there were nearly or quite as many in the south east part of the town as at this time. It appears that in 1658, Lib. 2, fol. 180, that John Fuller purchased of one John Cook, for one hundred and three score pounds, 750 acres of land, bounded north and west by Charles River, south by the farm of Samuel Shepherd, and east by the grounds of Thomas Parks. The southeast corner was at a large oak tree, which was standing until within a few years at the northeast corner of the farm improved by Wm. Bacon. This tree was, perhaps, the only land mark that has existed without variation in the town until so late a period.

As no house is recognized on this lot of more than a mile square, and bounded on each side by a single farm, no more than one house probably existed in that section in 1658; and it is probable that no house was erected on these 750 acres for more than twenty years afterwards, as in 1676, April 15, this John Fuller purchased of one John Magoon, 22 acres of land with a dwelling house and barn, also 5 acres near the falls on Charles River. This house, purchased of John Magoon is said to have stood on the same spot where the third, fourth and fifth meeting houses in the first parish were built. Subsequently to this purchase by John Fuller, he, with his seven sons, whose names all began with I, as no J's were then used, settled on the aforesaid 750 acres of land, which was known as "Fuller's Corner" for nearly a century. Two farms have been owned and improved by John Fuller's descendants until this time.

In 1796, five years after the town was incorporated, the citizens agreed to build a school house, and chose a committee to "treat with and persuade Mr. John Staples to keep the school," which he accordingly did, and received one shilling and sixpence per day as a compensation.

John Benjamin was the first constable, chosen in 1631, before it was changed to Cambridge.

Nathan Hammond was the first person who died after the town was incorporated. One of the most ancient houses, if not the most so, was the dwelling house of the late Mr. Samuel Ward, having, however, undergone some alterations prior to his death. It was originally used as a block, or garrison-house, to which the citizens of the town fled in times of danger to be more secure from the assaults of the Indians. The whole number of



deaths during the first century after it was incorporated, was 1374.

The first Town Clerk was James Trowbridge, who died, May 21, 1714; and the first couple that was married, was "Josiah Bush and Hannah, his wife," Dec. 25, 1691, by the said Town Clerk.

The successor to Mr. Hobart, was the Rev. John Cotton, ordained Nov. 3d, 1714, and died, May 17th, 1757. March 20th, 1720, his house was burnt.

In 1752, there died in the southeast part of the town, a Mrs. Davis, at the advanced age of 117 years, 115 days. She buried three husbands; had 9 children, and at her death, left 45 grandchildren, 200 great-grandchildren, and 800 great-great-grandchildren. It is said, at the age of 100 she was capable of performing a good day's work on her land, which she cultivated herself. Gov. Dudley visited her a few years before her death with a portrait painter, who took her likeness, which is now supposed to be in the possession of the Massachusetts Hist. Society.

The main roads through the town at this period, were the Sherburn road, so called, and the Worcester. The former passed through the Lower Falls, and by the house of Mathias Collins, Esq., and the East Parish meeting house. The one story house which stood on the spot where the new house of Mr. Hawkes stands, was kept as a public house many years. Among other occupants of the house in that capacity was the late Nathan Fuller, Esq.

The Worcester road passed over Weston Bridge, and over a range way now entirely disused by the public, by the house of Samuel Stimpson and the Messrs. Dix and Fullers, to the First Parish meeting house, which then stood at the intersection of the two principal roads to Boston, thus forming, at that period and many years subsequent, the most and only convenient centre for the whole town, not only as a place of worship but for holding town meetings. One branch of the Worcester road turned off somewhere probably between the house of Mr. Dix and Mr. Frost's, and passed over the high lands south of West Newton Village, and crossed the present road twenty or thirty rods south of Hull's crossing, to Newton Corner. A very few marks of its former location still exist. On that deserted portion west of Mr. Stimpson's, was a public house kept as such for many years, and a little west of the same was the house of Mr. Greenwood, who for many years held the office of Town Clerk, and in his day was the main personage for tying connubial knots. A few vestiges of both houses are still visible.

The next minister to Mr. Cotton was the Rev. Jonas Merriam, who was ordained March 22d, 1758, and died, August 13th, 1780.





In 1770, Mr. Merriam's house was also burned, together with all the church records.

In 1764, the meeting house in the West Parish was raised, but not finished till several years afterwards.

In 1780, the First Baptist Church in Newton was gathered, and the Rev. Caleb Blood was their pastor for seven years, when he was succeeded by the Rev. Joseph Grafton, who was ordained, June, 1788. Born in Newport, R. I. June 9, 1757; died Dec. 16, 1836, aged 79. His great prudence, winning manners and pleasing address, gained him universal respect. January, 1781, the Baptist Society agreed to build a meeting house by subscription, which, however, was not wholly accomplished until 1786; and in 1836 built their new house on the plain.

In 1781, a new Congregational Church was formed in the West Parish, and the Rev. Wm. Greenough was ordained Nov. 8th the same year, and died 1831, Nov. 10, aged 75 years. Among the most liberal benefactors to the new society was a Mr. Thomas Barber, who built the oldest part of what is known as the "Old Tavern House." He set out what is now called the great elm, in 1766 or 7, which was then so small that he brought it from the woods on his back.

Feb. 13, 1782, the Rev. Jonathan Homer was ordained over the First Congregational Church. Died, August 11, 1843, in the 62d year of his ministry.

The building of a meeting house and forming a new society in the West Parish was met with more violent opposition, if possible, than that of a division of the town at this time. Years of contest were spent before the society was incorporated in 1778. The line of division commenced at the south east corner of the farm of Samuel Woodward, at Charles River, and from thence in a straight line to the southeast corner of the farm improved by Daniel Fuller, and continuing the same course to Watertown line. But such were the conflicting views of many citizens, that this act of incorporation was accompanied by a proviso, that *any* person living on either side of the line, by leaving his name with the Secretary of the Commonwealth, within six months, might belong to the parish he should choose. This proviso, was repealed in 1788, and the line between the parishes became unconditional. This line, however, was not wholly defined for many years. An attempt was made to run the same, commencing at the southwesterly corner, but the same spirit which for many years had existed, broke out afresh upon some disputed point in the midst of a winter-squash yard, and the line passing over a large squash, the large end being east, the parties separated with no kind feelings, after giving to the east and west sections the nicknames of Squash-end and Bell-hack; and, although the latter has become obsolete, the former is still applied to the west portion of the town, as a term of reproach, by those who



are willing to betray indubitable marks of vulgarity and low breeding. This unkind feeling towards the west has never wholly subsided.

1805. The town voted to alter the school districts, which then consisted of six, and form two new ones, and build one new school house each year, commencing with the West. By a subsequent alteration the west school house was sold, and fitted into a store now owned by Mr. John Mead.

The number of houses in 1800, north of the line of division, as now prayed for, was 91. Lower Falls, 13.

West Parish, within the area of two square miles, 15.

Newton Corner, 13.

School houses in the whole town, 6; meeting houses, 3.

The population of Newton in 1800, was 1491; polls, 336; houses, 178.

Population in 1810, 1709; polls, 382; number of houses, 201.

Population in 1820, 1856; polls, 430; houses, 218.

Population in 1830, 2377; polls, 554; houses, 293.

Population in 1840, 3351; polls, 792; houses, 408.

In 1846, houses, 519; meeting houses, 8; polls, 1079.

In 1847, houses probably about 575; population, 5000.

Thus it will be seen that the population and number of houses in 1847 are more than three times as many as in 1800, therefore the measures which might have been equitable then, may be the most unjust in 1847.

The reader's attention is now called to consider the causes which have been operating since 1830, and kept the town in a constant state of excitement to the present time.

From the foregoing very brief history of the town, it will at once be seen, that until 1691, the citizens met at Cambridge to transact their town affairs; and until 1664, their place of worship was there also, and that from 1664, till 1780, (more than 100 years,) the only place of public worship in the town was the East Parish, being until then by far the most central, as the population then existed. And from the same causes it was also the constant place of holding town meetings, without complaint from any source, until about 1830, when the origin of the present difficulties commenced, and, as the records will show, commenced with and has been ever since continued by the citizens of the south and east part of the town. Although, by a most extraordinary feat of legerdemain, the oppressed, injured, and abused people of the west have, from time to time, by public documents, and private correspondence, together with almost every other method that calumny and detraction could accomplish, been represented as guilty of bribery, of being avaricious, of keeping alive this subject of strife, of seeking an unjustifiable object, &c. &c., and as those traits of character as pertaining to



the West have been endorsed by professors of religion, officers of churches, and those clothed with sacerdotal garments, holding high and responsible situations in the community, self-defence *compels* us, however reluctantly, to lay before the public an abstract of the town records since 1832, and other documents relating to this contest, particularly the "Remonstrance, signed by Thomas Edmands and others, mostly residing in the Centre," in 1846. And in so doing, we respectfully ask all candid men to lay aside all prepossessions, and form their opinion from the premises. As some reference to this remonstrance may be had, the largest portion of it is here inserted: although somewhat out of place as regards the order of time, and notwithstanding, exceedingly repugnant to the feelings of the writer, that such a document should have ever emanated from the citizens, "principally residing in the Centre," or from any other source; yet it has become a *public* document, and placed on file for public inspection beyond recal, together with its other kindred nearly allied; and would not the subject lead to a tedious prolixity, they would not pass unnoticed.

*Remonstrance of Thomas Edmands, &c. residing, &c.*

"Your petitioners having asked again for the long-contested line, or for a variation of it, which much increases its *monstrous* injustice, by embracing within its *bribing* embrace several additional locations," &c.

Alluding to the line as prayed for first reported unanimously by a committee of the town, the remonstrance says:

"The question referred to the Committee related merely to the expediency or practicability of a division, and *not* to the selection of any line."

"It was [the report of the Committee] not adopted at all."

"Here [Newton Corner] is *our* post office, and this post office ought to continue to be our own." \*

"The avarice of your petitioners grows marvellously keen as they advance in years; for besides aiming to secure the Lower Falls, West Newton, and the Corner, with their four growing depots, *robbing* the Centre of one of its thriving villages, their *grasping* principle," &c.

"This change of line is considered a *base* affront, a brazen-faced bribe."

"This subject of strife has been kept alive by a few discontented leaders, who wish to form a new Township by dividing our Corporation, notwithstanding they have been opposed by a

\* This portion appears to have been attached after it was signed, and taken from a former remonstrance from the same quarter.



great majority of our *peace-seeking* inhabitants, in town meeting assembled," &c.

"No town in our State was, we believe, ever called to endure such an aggravated trial, and to oppose such an unjustifiable object."

"As this present measure is the offspring of the same restless spirit which, during the five or six preceding years, has *forced* us to appear as remonstrants in your high court, at great expense in time and money to our town and our State, — a spirit which is the parent of contention and alienation, we beg your honorable body again to arrest its troublous propensity, by your just verdict. Under such, at this time, may we not hope that this unhappy *spirit* will cease its labors of annoyance?"

"The motto of your petitioners is continual contention. Ours is a permanent peace upon equitable principles. In the soil of Newton they sow thorns. We are laboring to cultivate the olive."

These charges, endorsed by Thomas Edmands and 140 others, "principally residing in Newton Centre," if true, ought to subject the guilty party to the censure of every honest and worthy citizen of the town; but if not true, but exactly the reverse, I leave the reader to form his own estimate of the document and its endorsers, many of whom, however, probably were not apprised of its contents, and knew nothing of the merits of the case. We therefore appeal to the decision of all honest men to determine who is the guilty party.

As was before observed, the citizens of the town, until about 1830, met at the first Parish Meeting-house from 1791, without complaint. About 1830, the proprietors of the first Parish Meeting-house objected to having the town meetings holden there; and for a period longer than the Greeks were in taking Troy, as the records show, has the contest about a Town-house lasted.

The great difficulties existing, arise from the peculiar features of the town, having no common centre for a Town-house, high school, &c.; and the unbending hostility of the East and South to *any* and *all* equitable measures whereby the people of the West might have an equal share of the common privileges of other sections.\* No reasonable, unbiassed man *can* point out a spot on the map where such buildings can be erected, and at the same time accommodate the whole town; neither can any other measure be adopted than to divide the town by the most equitable line of division; and, in confirmation of the assertion, the following extracts are presented:

\* Two exceptions ought to be made, William Kenrick and Loring Wheeler, Esq'srs. If left to them, the difficulties undoubtedly would long since have been settled.





November, 1832. *Voted*, that an article be inserted in the next warrant to see if the town will take any measures to procure a place for holding town meetings.

March 7, 1833. The foregoing article acted upon, and committee chosen. Meeting adjourned to the first Monday in April. Report of committee acted upon, recommending the erection of a Town-house near the Centre school-house, about thirty-five rods north-west of first Parish Meeting-house. (See map.) Moved to amend the report so as to have the same located on the plain, forty or fifty rods southerly of the Meeting-house; rejected. Moved to fix location in West Parish; rejected. So apparent that no location could be selected to accommodate the town, *voted*, not to accept the report of the committee, by vote of 344, more than seven-eighths of the voters present.

April 22, 1833. Another meeting called in about three weeks, for the purpose of locating a Town-house, by the citizens of the East part, who have been represented to the Legislature of 1846, as peace-seeking citizens and cultivators of the olive.\* A map of town exhibited on the occasion, with the location of the villages, showing the great injustice of locating the house near the Meeting-house. The people of the East say they had "seen it enough." First voted to locate it at the East end of vestry; afterwards voted to indefinitely postpone the subject of building a Town-house. Agreed to hold town meetings alternately at the Meeting-houses in the several villages. The East not satisfied.

June 10. Another meeting called by *them*, to see if the town would build a Town-house. Subject again indefinitely postponed.

November meeting. Article again inserted by the "cultivators of the olive," to see if the town will take any measures for locating and building a Town-house. Voted to defer the subject until the next town meeting.

December 16. Another *special* meeting called by request of the peace-seeking portion of the town, who probably began to suspect that their Meeting-house was not *exactly* in the centre either of population or territory; and if a Town-house were ever erected near their supposed centre, it must be done before there was any further increase of population in the West. At this time it was considered municipal heresy even to question the propriety of not locating a Town-house near the first Parish Meeting-house. It would probably have been as easy to convince the Chinese that their empire was not in the centre of the world, as the people of the East that justice required some other location. Sense of town taken relative to locating and building a Town-

\* See Remonstrance, page 10.



house, and locating same near the East Parish Meeting-house. Decided in the negative. Voted to locate the Town-house near the vestry. Voted to reconsider last vote. Voted to locate near Centre school-house. Committee chosen to procure land, build the house, &c. But very few present, except those engaged in cultivating olives.

December 27. Another meeting called by request of the citizens of the Lower Falls and West Parish, very few of whom attended the last meeting, being nearly worn out by the contest. Selectmen having made no provision for a place, the meeting was called to be holden at the Horse Sheds, for the purpose of reconsidering the doings of the last town meeting. Reconsidered by an overwhelming majority, and voted that the Selectmen procure a house for future meetings upon the best terms they can. The people of the West now supposed, that, after the vote of such a decided majority against building a Town-house, the "troubulous propensity" of keeping "this subject of strife alive" would enable the town to have a respite, particularly as the use of the old Baptist Meeting-house, and that in the West Parish, could be procured for less than half the interest of the money a Town-house would cost; and meeting alternately, as was done several times at those places, was satisfactory to the westerly section of the town, and probably would have so continued until the present time, if the East *could* have been satisfied.

January 27, 1834. Another meeting was called in four weeks, by those whose "motto is peace," "to see if the town will build a Town-house." Not one person, however, attended the meeting from the westerly section of the town, being actually disgusted with the proceedings. A further exhibition of the proficiency in "olive" culture was exhibited, by voting *unanimously* to locate and build a Town-house within fifty rods of the Powder house; see map. Comment is unnecessary. Committee chosen to proceed forthwith to the business; form and dimensions to be left to their discretion. The Treasurer authorized to pay all bills. The committee, with a vigilance worthy of a better cause, within twenty-four hours had most of the timber on the spot. All possible efforts used to have the building raised before another town meeting could be legally called. The elements prevent the accomplishment of their designs, as though high Heaven frowned on the undertaking. See map, and determine who are peace-seeking citizens.

February 8, 1834. Another meeting called forthwith, to reconsider the doings of the last town meeting. Great excitement throughout the town. A change of this unequal locality determined upon. A more general attendance than was ever witnessed before. Meeting organized. Moved by Hon. Wm.



Jackson, "That a committee, named by the Chair, be chosen to report at the adjournment of said meeting (half an hour), for the adoption of the town, such action in relation to the whole subject as, in their opinion, is not only best adapted to secure the future harmony and general welfare of the town, but will put this troublesome question where it will stay put." Meeting adjourned and committee retired. Meeting opened, and committee reported to locate and build a Town-house where now standing, and pay the Corporation of the Fuller Academy \$700, towards building a suitable hall, and that the town meetings be held alternately in those places. See map. Report of the committee accepted with almost a perfect unanimity; the people of the West perfectly satisfied, if a house must be built. General satisfaction throughout the town.

February. People of the East and South soon began to clamor against the measure. Some so lost to self-respect as to assert, the people of the West Parish placed the Town-house where now located. Some to this day, in that section, repeat the same impossible result. The great haste to raise the house has now subsided; not raised at March meeting.

March 4. An article inserted to see if the town will *reconsider all* the votes passed at the last town meeting, relative to building a hall in the West Parish. Vote whereby the town agreed to give the Corporation of the Fuller Academy \$700, was reconsidered by a vote of 164 yeas to 154 nays. The reconsideration of the vote relative to holding meetings alternately, was decided in the negative; yeas 142, nays 164. Town thus acted not only dishonorably, but very inconsistently, by voting to hold meetings alternately, and at the same time refusing *any* aid to provide a place.

July. Proprietors of Fuller Academy erect a fine spacious Hall at their own expense, hoping and expecting that the town would ultimately restore the amount, and wipe off the foul blot of repudiation with which her records were blackened beyond a parallel in municipal duplicity.

1835, 1836, 1837. Meetings holden exclusively in the Town-house.

March 6, 1837. Article 6 was to see if the town will consent to have the Lower Falls district set off to Needham or Weston. Article dismissed.

November 13, 1837. Question of meeting alternately in Fuller Academy, discussed. Article dismissed; subsequently reconsidered with the understanding that no compensation was to be made for the accommodation. This meanness highly censured by all honorable men.

1833. The South-east part of the town set off to Roxbury.

May 7. Efforts made to withhold all meetings at the Fuller Academy.



June 11. Same efforts again made. Motion made to choose a committee to consider the expediency of dividing the town. Article dismissed.

March 7, 1841. Ninth article was to see if the town would assume the debt of the corporation of Fuller Academy, about \$1,000, and retain the right of holding its spacious Hall for the use of the town. Committee chosen, with instruction to report at the adjournment of meeting. Adjourned to April 5th.

April 5. Report made. Voted not to assume the debt. Prospect that the building would soon pass into private hands.

April 19. Efforts made by Hon. Wm. Jackson and others, for the town to purchase it for fifteen hundred dollars; having cost proprietors over two thousand dollars. The report made by Mr. Jackson, on that occasion, was as follows: "For the whole town, the Fuller Academy is more central than the *Town-house* by 26 rods; for the villages of the town, 188 rods. If, therefore, the West had asked the town to build a *Town-house* there, at a cost as great as was incurred for that of the East, while the same was building for the East, it would have been *more* than equitable—it would have been generous, on the part of the West, even if the location at the East had been as good. It is not too much to say, that a more bleak and inconvenient place can hardly be found than that of the East; or a more comfortable, and in *all* respects, convenient location, cannot be found in the town than that of the West. Now *all* that is asked by the West is, that about three-fourths as much may be expended for *their* convenience, as has been for the other part of the town, after they have for several years borne the Centre's expense of providing a place of meeting." The vast increase of population since 1841, would now make a much greater difference in favor of that location.

Discussion cut short by moving the previous question. Proposition rejected. Must so much injustice be practised to afford the elements of nourishment to the olive? If so, will not honest and honorable men pluck it up, and cast it away, that it may cause no more offence?

Reader, whoever thou art, examine the map, consider the votes, and ask thyself on what portion of the town the seal of condemnation ought to be placed.

Second article was to see if the town, if they refuse to make any provision for holding town meetings in the West Parish, will take *any* measures relative to a division of the town, the only alternative for the oppressed citizens of the West. A committee was chosen, of one from each school district, to take into consideration the subject of a division of the town, and report at a future meeting. Time subsequently extended to November, six months.





November. Committee unanimously reported the line as heretofore prayed for. Report read and accepted by a large majority. Voted to divide the town. Voted that the last committee take proper measures to carry the same into effect. Much joy at the prospect of having the "question stay put." Would not "stay put."

December 22. Another meeting called by the East, to reconsider. None at meeting, except one voter, but "peace-seeking citizens!" Voted to reconsider doings of last meeting, by vote of 182 yeas, 1 nay. Efforts made, at same meeting, to prevent *any* future meetings being holden at the Fuller Academy. People of the West, after more than ten years' contest, apparently no nearer a consummation of difficulties than at first. Consult together about future measures. Conclude to call a town meeting to see if the town would not, upon reflection, either let them separate in peace, or make some provision for holding part of the town meetings in West Parish.

January 19, 1842. Meeting called. Both articles uncere- moniously dismissed.

Jan. 1842. No alternative left for the West but to lay their case before the legislature, as the town absolutely refused to provide any place of meeting a portion of the time there, or agree to divide peaceably.

Jan. 1842. Petition of Joel Fuller and others presented, for a division. Hearing had before the Committee on Towns. Suggested by petitioners that no objection would be had to have subject referred to next legislature. Accordingly referred.

1843. Petition of Joel Fuller taken from files, preliminary steps taken, hearing had, and bill for division reported. Re- committed for the ostensible object of remonstrants presenting some further testimony. Another hearing had, but nothing new presented. Committee unanimous for granting a bill. Doubts arise in the minds of the petitioners about its expediency, as the legislature was expected to rise in three or four days.

Petitioners concluded to request a committee of the legislature to be appointed. Such a committee appointed at their expense.

Sept. Legislative committee visit the town, examine its parts, viewing and hearing had of three days' continuance. All parties heard to the extent of their wishes. Committee of fifteen chosen by town to oppose.

Committee unanimously report in favor of a division by the line prayed for.

1844. People at the chemical works petition to be set off to Waltham; also another petition of the south-east part to be set off to Roxbury, from the south-west corner of Brookline to Kenrick's bridge.

Papers relating to the original petition, taken from the files, pass through preliminary stages.



Printed and written documents sent privately to the Committee on towns. Found among their papers, with false statements made therein, viz. that the committee first reported adversely to petitioners; that Deacon Joel Fuller was so informed by letter from chairman; Mr. — had seen it; that S. Davis, of the West, went to Concord, spent several days with chairman; that the committee *afterwards* altered their report; that the committee refused to examine the town thoroughly; that they were led by Mr. Davis wherever he chose; that it was only a political measure to answer political purposes, &c., &c.

Mr. Davis never saw Mr. Gourgas from the week the hearing was had until the day the committee met to agree upon their report. He, being officially called to Concord, by appointment made *three* months previous, carried a note to Mr. Gourgas from Deacon Joel Fuller, simply requesting him to send their bill; note taken to Mr. Gourgas' house; unexpectedly found the other committee there; remained in the house, probably, less than ten minutes, and never saw committee afterwards until they made their report. The bill brought to Deacon Fuller had the following appendage, about which so many simple misstatements have been made, and is as follows:

“ *Concord, Dec. 4, 1843.*

“ Dear Sir,— The Viewing Committee in the Newton case met here to-day, and agreed unanimously upon a report, and all that is now left is for me to draw up that report. I trust the report will give satisfaction; but if we shall succeed in this respect, it will be a most agreeable disappointment to me.”

The ambiguity in the above was the mountain that brought forth the mouse. Instead of Mr. D.'s leading, he rode with one of the committee chosen to oppose, and was not with the committee more than half the time at the hearing.

1844. A town meeting called to act upon the subject; chose a committee to oppose. Certain persons, with elongated phiz, most piteously bemoaned the circumstance of a division; thought the town might and would adopt such pacific measures as to reconcile all the difficulties; chose a committee of one from each school district for the purpose; no confidence had by the citizens of the West of any measures being adopted for their relief, and if so reported would not be adopted by the town; satisfied that it was only a farce to defeat the division. Intelligence was conveyed next day by the then representative, that all difficulties would be adjusted, consequently that a division was unnecessary; members of the legislature misled by the announcement; bill defeated by the manœuvre. Committee “charged with the duty of inquiring into the practicability of some measure of compromise:” after several meetings, unable to agree on any



plan sustained by more than a "bare majority." Just the result expected by every man of discernment.

March 25, 1844. Majority and minority reports presented.

Majority recommend the erection of a Town-house at the West Parish, for the whole town, as being 106 miles nearer the centre of population than the present Town-house, and as the most suitable place, all things considered; "that it would secure the greatest good to the greatest number;" that such a location will be *sure* to put at rest the question of division, &c. &c.

Minority report recommend the erection of a Town-house in the centre of territory!!

This central point is described in a printed document, by one of the remonstrants to our division, as follows: "This central point and dividing range being throughout and almost entire, from the southern boundary at the Charles River to the north, a wide expanse of territory, on all sides hilly, or woody, or broken, or low; in most parts uncultivated and unreclaimed — an extensive solitude."

Statement of Viewing Committee appointed by the legislature: "The centre of territory is in a wild and secluded spot, distant from *all* the villages, immediately surrounded by a very thin population. It is a place, in the estimation of the committee, as utterly unfit for the purpose as any which *could* be selected. The selection of such a spot would not accommodate *any* portion of the town, and the best argument in its favor seems to be that it would be about equally inconvenient to all." See map.

Both reports laid on the table.

Majority report remained there ever since.

Minority report resuscitated April 29th, 1844, about one month. A special meeting called to act on the minority report. None present but cultivators of the olive, on whose account the meeting was called.

"Voted, That the town proceed to build a Town-house in the territorial centre agreeably to a late minority report!"

Committee chosen to purchase land, &c. &c.

No. of olive agriculturists present, . . . . 115

" " thorn " . . . . 0

Durst not proceed.

The proprietors of the first Parish Meeting-house being desirous to alter its interior, came to the conclusion that a hall for town meetings might form the under story, and the upper story their place of worship.

At next town meeting, efforts were made by certain individuals to provide some other place than the Town-house for holding town meetings, that is, this said hall, that was to be. Voted down.

Would people, knowing these facts, come to the conclusion,



unless they had been told, that the citizens of the East and Centre were peace-seeking citizens?

1845. Another petition presented for division. Order of notice refused on account of its lateness. Many of the most influential men at Newton Corner sign the petition. Nov. A meeting called at the village of Newton Corner, to oppose *any* petition that might be offered. No measure suggested, as usual, beyond that of opposition.

Most of the citizens commit themselves. A few individuals have too much independence and consistency to yield.

1846. Another petition for a division of the town by the line of Coldstream Brook.

This line meets with much less favor than the other. Several erase their names from this petition. Say they thought it a remonstrance. Another petition for a division by the old line.

Orders of notice and town meeting had. Town voted to oppose. Chose a committee, who employed counsel at the expense of town.

Great efforts used by a very few individuals to obtain signatures to remonstrances. Some persons paying only a poll tax most active. An unexpected remonstrance from Lower Falls, objecting to a division at *this* time, 1846. A few individuals from that village and Newton Corner still adhere to their former honest, independent, and consistent course. No reason given by Newton Corner, except that a majority were opposed.

But that impartial men may judge of the merits and correctness of the remonstrance of Thomas Edmands and others, by which the people of the West feel deeply injured, a few of its most objectionable parts will be analyzed.

From Remonstrance. "Your petitioners having again asked for the long-contested line, or a variation of it, which much increases its monstrous injustice."

This monstrous injustice may be inferred from the following Documents No. 22, of Senate, 1844, in the remonstrance of Wm. Jackson and others, *against any other line*: — "A line commencing near Thomas Smallwood's and running southerly to a point on Charles River, &c. A line deliberately fixed upon several years since, as the *most* suitable and fair line of division, by a committee in which the *whole* town was represented by a member from each school district in the town, which line said committee were unanimous in recommending as the most suitable for the town," &c.

From the Legislative Viewing Committee's Report. "The line of division proposed by the petitioners is the most just which could be adopted."

From the Committee of the *town* who first reported the line. "A line drawn from the corner of the road near the monument





adjacent to the premises of Thomas Smallwood to the south side of the road in front of the house of William Wiswall the 2d, continuing to Charles River, appeared better calculated to promote the mutual accommodation of the two sections than any other."

Remonstrance. "The question referred to the committee related merely to the expediency or practicability of a division, and *not* to *any* line."

From the Committee's Report. "The Committee to whom was referred the subject of a division of the town, understood the vote as calling for a detail of the *way* and *manner* in which it might be fairly and judiciously done, *rather* than for any reasons or apologies for the movement."

Remonstrance. "The report was not adopted at all."

Town Records, Nov. 1841. "The Report of the Committee on the subject of a division of the town was read, and it was voted to accept the report.

"Voted, That the town be divided.

"Voted, That the Committee above named make application to the next legislature for a division of the town."

Reader, what thinkest thou?

"Here, [Newton Corner,] to a great majority of us, is our post office, and *this* post office ought to continue to be our own."

From a petition of the inhabitants of Newton Centre, to the Post Office Department.

"*To the Hon. Sec.*

"Your memorialists respectfully represent, that they reside in the first and *principal* Parish of the township of Newton, &c., within the bounds of which and in their immediate neighborhood, are two large and respectable churches, a Theological Seminary, the most important one connected with the Baptist denomination in the United States, a female academy, and a boarding school for boys of considerable repute, surrounded on all sides by rather wealthy, intelligent farmers, and that they are subject to an extensive correspondence with different portions of the Union."

"We would further represent, that about two miles north of us is a small village, commonly known as Newton Corner, lying within half a mile of the flourishing village and post office of Watertown, through which," &c.

"That there is a post office in said village (Newton Corner) known by the name of the Newton post office, and also *one* in *our* village, known as the Newton Centre post office."

"That, in consequence of the peculiar designation of the offices of Angier Corner and at this place, your memorialists have ever been subject to great inconvenience from the misdirection



of their letters, and especially has this been the case with the officers and students of our literary and theological institutions, whose numerous correspondents in different parts of the country have addressed them as residing in Newton; and thus their letters have been sent to the aforesaid office upon the borders of Watertown, while papers and letters directed to Newton Corner have been sent to Newton Centre office, being the one in *our village*," &c.

"We have now *no* direct mail communication with the Newton post office, to which many of our letters are sent.

"We therefore respectfully pray the honorable head of the Post Office Department, that he will order that the post office at Newton Corner shall be denominated the Newton Corner post office; and that the office now called the Newton Centre post office shall hereafter be called the Newton post office, to which name we are justly entitled by our location in the town and the *importance* of the office."

That very great and serious inconvenience results to other parts of the town, in consequence of the designation of the Newton post office, as well as to Newton Centre, no one will deny; and perhaps justice requires the alteration *prayed* for. But the duplicity, by making it a pretence that the town ought *not* to be divided, because such results *must* follow, as a thing of course, as are *prayed* for by the same persons (more than sixty), is unpardonable.

Whether this petition of the inhabitants "principally residing in the Centre," was considered by the Post Office Department as indicative that their "avarice had grown marvellously keen as they advanced in years," or whether the change of name was considered "a base affront, a brazen-faced bribe," is not known; but the prayer was not granted, and probably will not be until the town is divided. Five post offices, however, in one town, afford a strong argument in favor of such a measure.

Remonstrance. "No town was ever, we believe, called to endure such an aggravated trial, and to oppose such an unjustifiable object."

From a petition of the principal men of Newton Lower Falls, 1843.

"*To the Hon. &c.*

"The undersigned, inhabitants of the town of Newton, respectfully represent that the causes which have long been operating to make a division of this town necessary for the convenience of the inhabitants in the discharge of town duties *indispensable* for their future peace and prosperity, have *now* reached a point that



makes it our duty to join the petitioners for a division. *The peace of all and the public good require it.* We therefore respectfully ask of your honorable bodies in aid of the petition of Joel Fuller and others, and that the same may be granted."

#### Report of the Viewing Committee of the Legislature.

"The Committee desire to say, after a full hearing of the parties, and from all the knowledge they have been able to obtain of the case, they have unanimously come to the opinion that it would be for the best interest of the whole town, under existing circumstances, that a division should take place, and that the line of division proposed by the petitioners is the most just which could be adopted."

Remonstrance. "Forced us to appear as remonstrants in your high court at great expense in time and money to ourselves, our town, and our State."

The petitioners are the persons of all others to complain of the great expense in time and money by this opposition to a measure which is "indispensable for the future peace and prosperity of the town," "when the peace of all and the public good require it." They are not only heavily taxed, their proportion of the town expenses already amounting "in time and money" to thousands of dollars, but are compelled to bear the whole of their own expense of carrying on this contest, which would have been settled years since were it not for a very few "discontented leaders," some of whom, paying only a poll tax, have been the most unyielding.

The double drain upon the resources of the petitioners have thus greatly diminished their means of contributing towards many benevolent objects of the present day.

"The avarice of your petitioners grows marvellously keen as they advance in years." This refined language was probably used in consequence of the petitioners for a division in 1846 asking for the old line, or one beginning at or near Indian Lane, in consequence of some gentlemen at Newton Corner suggesting it as being more satisfactory. And no doubt such a line would *ultimately* be the most desirable, if adopted. The town of West Newton might then be *conveniently* and peaceably subdivided, and form two towns; and such a result would undoubtedly follow in less than the time that this contest has lasted.

The citizens of the East will find that withholding more than is meet will tend to poverty.

Call it avarice, or or by any other appellative, indicative of hostile or kind feelings, it needs no spirit of prophecy to foresee



that the East, by their unyielding disposition, are preparing the way for a line of division farther south than Indian Lane.

"This subject of strife has been kept alive by a few discontented leaders, who wish to form a new township."

This barefaced, unblushing assertion requires no further comment than to ask the reader to examine the map five minutes, and learn the locality of the West Parish and the present Town-house, and also turn to the doings of that portion of the town whose motto is "permanant peace," as recorded from 1833 to 1845, particularly December 16, 1833, January 27, 1834, February 8th, March 9th, November 8th, 1838, December 22, 1840, January 19, 1841, April 19, 1844, &c. &c.

That this subject of strife has been kept alive by a few discontented leaders, no one will deny; but their locality is east longitude from West Newton. A *very* few individuals in that locality have kept this contest from being "stayed put" ever since Feb. 8, 1834, some of whom would have rendered far more valuable service to the town by having employed their time in chiseling epitaphs of men who never had independence enough to act otherwise, than in accordance with the views of "large majorities," or in printing a history of the innumerable acts of tyranny, oppression, and imprisonment, and of the numerous cases of death itself, in accordance with the views of such bodies, such as hanging Quakers, imprisoning Baptists, banishing nonconformists, and summoning men to appear before the "high court," for petitioning, &c.\* A Galileo with his head bare, frosted with the snows of many winters, on the feeble bended knee, was compelled to appear before the "High Court" of priests and cardinals, to answer for the crime of his "troubulous propensity" of asserting that the earth turned on its axis.

Is it not time to meet this question upon its merits, rather than of inquiring whether this man or that village is in favor or opposed? If any other measure than that of a division will meet the case, why not adopt it? If setting a Town-house in the territorial centre will heal the difficulty, why not do that? Or if locating the same in the West Parish, agreeably with the recommendation of a majority of the *last* Committee chosen by

\* 1637. At a Court holden in Newtowne, Mr. Aspin was summoned to appear and answer. Was sentenced to seven years' banishment for drawing up and signing a petition in favor of Mr. Wheelwright. They met at Newtowne, because Boston was so infested with this new opinion.

1651. "It was ordered, that if any person or persons shall either openly condemn or oppose the baptizing of infants, or go about secretly to seduce others, or shall deny the ordinance of magistracy, (that is, of large majorities,) and shall appear to the Court wilful, shall be sentenced to banishment."

1656. "That what Quaker soever shall arrive in this country, shall be forthwith committed to the House of Correction, and at their entrance be





the town, why has it not been done, if it will accomplish the object? If any other line than the one proposed be more equitable, why has it not been pointed out? The line prayed for by William Kenrick and others, had very few supporters; or will waiting longer diminish the obstacles in the way of a division? Surely not. Upon the supposition that the people of the West had never complained of the acts done by "large majorities," can the elements existing in the town produce any other result than that of "continual strife"? The Town-house must be enlarged. Will, or ought the people of the West, to submit to such injustice as to have it remain in its present locality?

Reader, look at the map, and answer the question. What was the character of the very last effort in town to have the place of meeting at the first Parish Meeting-house, by the alteration contemplated? If such a result could follow, would the descendants of the Anglo-Saxons in the West submit to be taxed for the accomplishment of such an object? No candid man can say that they ought so to do. Why not, then, adopt the course always resorted to in such cases, viz. divide the town as was done in Cambridge in 1807, when Brighton and West Cambridge were both incorporated, and resulted much to their *interest*, convenience, and prosperity?

No town in Middlesex County has so large a population as Newton, and but a few that would number as many inhabitants

severely whipt, and none suffered to speak with them; and if any person shall knowingly import Quaker books concerning their devilish opinions, he shall pay for every book £5; and if any person shall defend them, they shall pay forty shillings for the first offence, and four pounds for the second offence, and for the third offence shall be banished."

These laws being proclaimed, by beat of drum, in the streets of Boston, "Nicholas Upshal, a man of about sixty years, came out of his house, and told the officers, that the prosecution of these laws would be the forerunner of judgments." Upshal was summoned to appear before the Court next morning, and fined £20 and ordered to depart the jurisdiction.

1657. In October, a law was passed, "That if any person should entertain or conceal any Quaker, every such person should forfeit forty shillings for every hour's entertainment." That every Quaker, for the first offence, should have one of his ears cut off; for the second, the other ear; and for the third, have his tongue bored through with a hot iron.

1658. It was enacted "That every person upon conviction, and continuing obstinate and refusing to retract, shall be banished upon pain of death." Under this law, enacted by "large majorities," William Robinson, Marmaduke Stephenson, Mary Dyer, and William Leddra, were executed, Oct. 27, 1659.

1661. Peter Pierson and Judah Brown, Quakers, being indicted, stood mute. "The Court ordered that they shall, by the Constable of Boston, be forthwith taken out of prison and stripped from the girdle upwards, by the executioner, and tied to the cart's tail, and whipped through the town with twenty stripes, and then carried to Roxbury and delivered to the Constable there, who is also to tie them to the cart's tail and again whip them through the town, with ten stripes, and carried to Dedham and delivered to the Constable there, who is again, in like manner, to cause them to be tied to the cart's tail, and whipped with ten stripes more through the town, and from thence they are immediately to depart this jurisdiction upon their peril."



as would be contained in each section, were it divided by the proposed line of division. Cambridge, West Cambridge, and Brighton, in 1807, at which time both the last-named towns were incorporated, had a less number of inhabitants than is now contained in Newton. Little Cambridge, which now constitutes the town of Brighton, at the time of its incorporation, contained less than one-seventh of the population of the present town of Newton; and Menotomy, now West Cambridge, at the same period, had less than one-fifth; the area of the three towns being about equal to that of Newton.

The average population of the several towns in Middlesex County (Cambridge, Lowell, and Charlestown, being cities) is less than thirteen hundred; consequently, if Newton were equally divided into two towns, each would contain nearly double the average number of inhabitants in the other towns in the county; and, judging prospectively, in less than five years, each section will contain four thousand inhabitants. But although its great area and numerous population would require the division, yet the strong ground of the argument is, its *very* peculiar features. Any unbiassed person, who examines the map, must see that a division is inevitable. Then why not meet the question fairly upon its merits, *now*, instead of warding off the measure under the shield of "large majorities," which Heaven has permitted, in the present case, to trample upon the rights and interest of the minority; and who, acting in the mass, appear to have forgotten their individuality and personal accountability, and, by making a division of responsibility, have sanctioned measures they would not dare to do if alone responsible?

The will of "large majorities," upon general principles, ought to be regarded; but when they oppress, instead of protecting, the minority, they only exhibit the embodiment of tyranny and oppression. "Large majorities" have never as yet been stamped with the seal of infallibility. It has generally been found, whenever any new measure has been proposed, however politic and beneficial, that they have opposed. So general was this the case in the days of Franklin, that he asserted that "minorities were generally right." And the presentation of a few more annual tax bills will convince the citizens of Newton, that interest as well as convenience requires a division, and, after years of contest, will undoubtedly admit the correctness of Franklin's views. Look at the subject in every possible light, and the same conclusion is the result. Place a Town-house in the West Parish, and you at once grant to the citizens of the East and South a strong pretext to be set off to Roxbury and Brookline. Place it in the centre of territory, and the town would become a laughing-stock for their consummate folly. Hold meetings alternately in the West and at the Town-house, which would once have satisfied the



West, and all the *discordant, conflicting, and various* interests will ere long convince the town, that any corporation that requires the erection of two Town-houses to meet the wants of its citizens makes out a *prima facie* case, that "the peace of all and the public good require a division" of such a town.

People out of town are astonished, that any at Newton Corner or the Lower Falls should object to a division by which they would constitute one of the most convenient, thriving, and respectable towns in the county, saving more than 400 miles each town meeting.\*

This result would not be materially altered whether the house were at the West Parish or Hull's Crossing. The village of Newton Corner, by its enterprise and rapid increase of population, has thrown around itself a halo of attraction; but that the East, independent of any prospective object, would, in a pecuniary point of view, be the gainer, if it were retained on that side, or the West the loser, is very much doubted. Taxation, generally, increases in a much greater ratio than population; consequently any village will require *all* its proportion of taxes to meet its expenditures. Watertown would be impoverished to be united to Cambridge, and Brighton to the same, of which, till 1807, it formed a part. Taxes are higher in Boston now than forty years since. The same will apply, as a general rule, to the towns throughout the Commonwealth.

A town with 4,000 inhabitants, residing in different villages, requires more than twice as much to meet its expenditures, as it would if it formed two separate corporations. Taxes in Newton will go on increasing as its population increases. Chelmsford, independent of any inconvenience, would not probably receive back the city of Lowell.

The advantages of any location depend upon its proximity to populous cities or villages, whether one or a dozen territorial lines intervene. A dividing line between school districts has just as much effect as a town line, as to any advantages of trade, &c. and no more. May it not, therefore, be hoped that the question will be met with candor, examined with care, and the result follow which has so long been wished for, by putting this "troublesome and vexatious question where it will stay put"?

\* Average distance of Lower Falls to present Town-house, 1173 rods; to West Parish, 735. Number of voters, over 60. From Chemical Works to Town-house, 1575 rods; to West Parish, 525. Voters, 20. From West Parish to Town-house, 920 rods; to Meeting-house, 80. Voters, 90. Saving to many others from one to two miles, while the distance is not increased to one individual in town.

NEWTON, February, 1847.

S. DAVIS.







#### REFERENCES.

- No. 1. First Parish Meeting House, being the third on the same spot, not yet completed.  
 2. W. Parish Meeting House, built 1764.  
 3. Ep. " Church " 1814.  
 4. Methodist " " 1829.  
 5. Second Baptist Church, " 1835.  
 6. Universalist " " 1842.  
 7. Elliot " " 1845.  
 8. First Baptist Meeting House, " 1836.  
 † Powder House built on plain.  
 ‡ Fuller Academy, now Normal School.















